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GRESFORD VALE;

AND

OTHER POEMS.

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OTHER POEMS.

BY

M. HOLFORD,

AUTHOR OF FANNY AND SELIMA.



Gresford Lodge.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR HOOKHAM AND CARPENTER, NO. 14, OLD BOND STREET.

1798.

GRESTFORD VALLE,

OTHER POEMS.

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PRINTED FOR HOUGHAM AND CARPENTER, NO. 11, OLD BOND STREET.

1838.

GRESFORD VALE:

INSCRIBED TO

Mrs. PARRY

AND

Mrs. ELLEN WARRINGTON.

WELL pleas'd, for once I quit the long-lov'd side
Of thy meand'ring flood, salubrious tide,
Which reflux glides to meet the stormy main,
And fraught with cheering breezes flows again,
Pellucid Deva! May thy curling stream
Roll on celebrated through the poet's theme;
Thy stream so fam'd, to distant ages trac'd,
By sceptres * honour'd, and by beauty † grac'd;
Which lent a spark to Milton's sacred fire,
A spark, relumin'd on the graceful lyre ‡,
Whence Sapphic strains diffuse, through later days,
The dulcet effluence of the Lesbian bays.

* Chester, in the daies of King Edgar, was in most flourishing estate, where he had the homage of eight other kings, who rowed his barge from St. John's to his palace, himself holding the helm as their supream.—*Speed's Theatre of Great Britain.*

† This city was again rebuilt by Edelfleada, the Mercian lady.—*Speed.*

‡ See Miss Seward's beautiful poem on Llangollen Vale.

A while, farewell to Cestria's ancient walks,
 Where jocund Mirth her willing vot'ries calls
 To join the dance, or lift the vocal strain,
 To share those calm delights, whence no foul stain,
 No blot to scare reflection's left behind,
 But social intercourse draws mind to mind.

The errant Muse a while prefers to dwell
 With Contemplation in her moss-grown cell;
 O'er the brown heath, or silent copse to stray,
 Or rest at noontide on the new-turn'd hay;
 At eve to listen to the shepherd's tale,
 And from the treasures of the cleanly pail
 (Unlike the bowl with smiling dangers fraught),
 From Hebe's hand accept a healthful draught;
 Culling from ev'ry sweet of Nature's store,
 She feasts, and feels a growing taste for more:
 Till to her use, appropriate and design'd,
 By Nature soften'd, and by Art refin'd,
 She owns a banquet for each finer sense,
 And ev'ry votive meed its recompence.
 The curious eye, no more in endless space
 Fatigues itself, in fruitless hope to trace
 The smiling imag'ry it fondly loves,
 Nor with exhaustless Fancy aching roves.

Gresford, embosom'd in thy calm recess,
 The sylvan deities, dispos'd to bless,

To sooth and tranquillize the soul, recline ;
 Whilst Pleasure, rural nymph, before their shrine
 The oaten reed attunes to artless lays,
 In metre poor, but rich in heartfelt praise.
 Here blushing Nature in her modest vest,
 Contented only to delight, is dress'd
 With studied negligence and graceful care ;
 As at the toilet's rites, the conscious fair,
 When first Love's subtle flame her bosom warms,
 Lends secret aid to her seducing charms,
 Resigns coquetry's darling wish to tease,
 And, deigning to be happy, stoops to please.
 In Gresford's Vale no garish tints invite,
 Attract with wonders, and with perils fright :
 Here no huge cliffs, majestic, pierce the clouds,
 Nor roaring billows chase the stubborn shrouds :
 No rocky fragments, buoy'd in trembling state,
 On the nice scale of undecided fate,
 Appal the soul, and strike a transient sense,
 Of all the direful horrors of suspense,
 Doom'd to appease Apollo's vengeful ire,
 His righteous sentence on Coronis' fire :
 No hideous howlings from the savage den
 Affail the ear,—nor in the darksome glen
 Lurks the fell band, by force of reason (given
 As man's best blessing by indulgent Heaven)
 Made, by perversion, in his death more apt.
 Nor here the mind, in wild amazement rapt,

Perceives Creation's awful terrors rise,
And find, its only recompence—surprise.

Content, presiding Genius of the place,
Her easy mantle throws with winning grace,
And bids o'er paths diversified expand
The subtle influence of her magic wand,
The boldest lines of contrast's force to seize,
And teach irregularity to please.

Here blended forms adorn the varied scene,
Fearlessly grand, and splendidly serene.
As o'er th' enamell'd mead I raptur'd stray,
And the crush'd may-flowers mark my silent way,
To no poetic god of fictitious fame
I pay my vows, or invoke his name.
Should my rude verse disgrace the tuneful Nine,
Let Nature guide, and Truth excuse the line.
Marking old Allen's course, who would not say,
The stream in rippling eddies likes to play,
Enjoys the birth which bounteous Nature gave,
And loves the bank it is his task to lave?
When o'er the broken rock the torrent roams,
And the white froth in louder murmurs foams,
No hostile sounds the list'ning ear invade,
'Tis but the babbling of the cool cascade;
Simply a parting tribute, understood,
Accepted off'ring of the grateful flood,

Ere through the arch he takes his farewell flight,
And winding vallies steal him from the sight.
The passing wave, the drooping willow mourns,
Symbol of fleeting time, which ne'er returns.
Mourn on, thou melancholy shrub! and bear
Gresford's sole emblem of a falling tear.

Ah, Vale belov'd! the eye unfetter'd roves
O'er mountains, dales, green lawns, and shady groves;
Beholds each beauty in its proper place,
And takes in all thy little world of grace;
Surveys the sloping bank, the rising hill,
Majestic turret, and the rustic mill;
Pursues the sky-lark in his soaring flight,
Till the dense ether cheats its eager sight,
Then seeks the warbling fugitive in vain,
While on the ear yet thrills the trembling strain:
Nor less delighted, will its sense repose
On the trim tulip, and the op'ning rose:
Or by the solitary angler wait
The doubtful prowess of the treach'rous bait,
Share in his cruel aims, and, anxious grown,
Take half the paltry triumph for its own;
Unmoist by pity's touch, when flound'ring lies,
Prone at its victor's feet, the scaly prize.
Or, pleas'd again on gentler scenes to gaze,
Where lambkins sport and cluster'd cattle graze,

Watch o'er the labours of the village swain,
 The lowliest tenant of the neighb'ring plain,
 Attend him home, and see around him smile
 The dear consolers of his day of toil :
 Steal through the annals of his homely state,
 And spy the fountain of his softer fate ;
 (The swollen bosom and the grateful tear
 Speak from the heart, BENEVOLENCE is near :)
 Then view the stately dome, Arcadian cot,
 Which banish wonder from his happy lot.
 'Tis thine, bright orb, to range from flower to flower,
 Pervade the hamlet or sequester'd bower,
 Traverse, unchain'd by arbitrary rules
 Of letter'd pedants and sophist schools,
 Wander, or stay, as divers charms impel,
 Glide o'er the hill, or linger in the dell,
 Range, as some new-discover'd trait invites,
 From Cestria's spires to Cambria's distant heights :
 But to how few the gifts divine belong
 To bid the garden smile, " the fields look green in song ! "

Though Truth and Nature are the powers sublime,
 That claim the tribute of untutor'd rhyme,
 Scorning the incense of unworthy praise,
 'Tis Truth and Nature that defy my lays :
 Yet ah ! when to the reptile man 'tis given
 By adoration to aspire to Heaven,

Heaven, ever gracious, ever prone to spare,
 Turns not indignant from the suppliant's prayer,
 Marks but the zeal which may the action prompt,
 Nor weighs the method in the great account.
 Though rob'd in honours, let them not disdain
 The honest motive of a languid strain :
 No grove is blighted by the feeble words,
 Nor fades the landscape as the pen records ;
 Still smiles the wood, unconscious of the stroke,
 Unbent the poplar, and unmov'd the oak :
 Unhurt the tend'rest flowret blooms—and e'en
 Th' unfeeling laurel will itself look green,
 In wonted pride its gayest foliage spread,
 Nor drop one leaf to deck the poet's head :
 Else on creation's wiser sons, how hard
 Had been the moment that produc'd a bard !
 A bard at least, whose interdicted quill
 Ne'er dipt its point in the Pierian rill :
 How many a fallen tower we might deplore,
 How many hills would touch the skies no more,
 Gone, like the " baseless fabric of a " dream,
 If, with his short-liv'd labours, died his theme !
 But spare the egotist, his thoughts recall,
 Who, if he quits his subject, quits his all.

The Arts, resign'd to WARRINGTON's control,
 Lend a light touch to decorate the whole ;

Pursue their mother Nature's simple plan,
 Nor dare to finish, but as she began :
 Hence springs th' appropriate thought, the chaste design,
 The taste which few may feel, and none define ;
 From hence, lov'd Vale, thy magic spell we find,
 Which spreads its witching trammels o'er the mind ;
 Hence canst thou all the soul's best passions seize,
 And all those passions in succession please.
 If, first in honour, though not first obey'd,
 Religion, patient, persecuted maid,
 From scenes of warfare, seeks some calm abode,
 To pour in peace her orisons to God,
 To chaunt the glories of his hand, ah ! where
 Are found his works more amplified than here ?
 Or where can fervent Gratitude attain
 A spot more hallow'd to erect her fane ?
 Where cull more sweets the festive wreath to twine ?
 Where find more tributes to adorn her shrine ?
 E'en Joy, ecstatic, when he stays to choose,
 Meets here temptations, which he can't refuse.
 Pity, her active spirit may repose,
 Free from th' enormity of human woes,
 Which with insatiate roar, and wolfish din,
 Proclaim themselves the progeny of Sin :
 Yet shall she trim her lamp, its flame shall live—
 Ah ! where shall Pity's bosom cease to heave ?
 Love (though of different aspect, near allied
 To the soft passion by the mother's side)

Pours oil, and cherishes the lambent heat,
 And lends the breast new energy to beat :
 Love, ab-origine of lawns and groves,
 A smiling mischief that unheeded roves,
 With bow unbent, and unsuspected dart,
 Till the barb'd point lies rankling in the heart—
 Love, but too prone in Gresford's Vale to dwell,
 As eyes downcast, and artless sighs will tell,
 Though Hymen, sapient power, has often bound
 His healing bandage o'er the bleeding wound.

Friendship, who rarely cheers life's busy walk,
 Where fiend-like Envy, Pride, and Discord stalk,
 With the blest influence of her milder rays,
 Those tranquil fires, which glow, but never blaze,
 Serene as radiant, as unwont to harm
 The breast congenial, which they deign to warm ;
 Friendship, whose pure selective sense reveals
 All Nature's richest stores, elated feels
 The home she likes, acknowledges her sphere,
 And, quitting worldly noise, reposes here.

Stranger, behold yon shrubs umbrageous, spread
 Where through their branches peeps yon straw-built shed *,
 Yon fly deceiver—nicely form'd to screen
 The richer elegance that reigns within :

* Mrs. Warrington's beautiful cottage.

So at the midnight masque the high-born maid,
 In Pastorella's simple garb array'd,
 Eludes the glances of inquiring eyes,
 Displays new charms, and conquers in disguise.
 Or let the varying scene thy steps beguile ;
 See British genius rear the loftier pile * :
 The Doric pillars mark the blest'd abode
 Of some benign, some tutelary god :
 Shelter'd from passing storms, or mid-day heat,
 Which lend new value in each calm retreat,
 Whether they saunter in the colonade,
 Or rest recumbent in the beechen shade,
 Pursue the path the sister Worthies tread,
 For there 'tis Friendship's fav'rite task to lead.
 Wherever Warrington and Parry stroll,
 Friendship commands, and elevates the soul ;
 Friendship, who with her lenient hand can heal
 Misfortune's deepest wounds, and gently steal
 All the corroding venom from the heart,
 Infus'd by Disappointment's iron dart,
 Can lend each kindred tie a closer fold,
 And turn life's tinsel pleasures into gold.

Long may the chosen delegates of Heaven,
 To whom the charge beneficent is given,

* Gresford Lodge, the seat of J. Parry, Esq.

To guard each access to this fair domain,
Here bid the sweets of Eden bloom again,
Crush ev'ry noxious weed, avert each blighting gale,
Nor cease with blest'd effulgence to illumine the Vale.

SONNET,

TO SPRING.

NOW youthful Spring his verdant mantle spreads,
And decks in fresh attire the blushing meads ;
Lambkins begin to play : creation smiles,
Save but its fairest part—one hapless maid :
Amynta erst in winter jocund stray'd,
Nor reck'd the low'ring sky—for Love beguiles
The tempest's rage, and Strephon then was kind.
Chang'd are the seasons—chang'd Amynta's mind—
For Strephon roves : the sun on chill despair,
As on the frosty Caucasus, in vain
Sends forth its cheering ray.—A thoughtless swain
Usurp'd its influence o'er the constant fair :
The wanderer returns—storms disappear,
And Spring perpetual vests the happy year.

SONNET,

TO A SUMMER EVENING.

NOW day's last purple gilds the evening scene,
Now sounds the shepherd's pipe along the glade,
Mild zephyrs whisper 'mong the willows green,
Whose leafy branches cast a browner shade.
Now with light heart the peasant homeward hies,
With carols blithe he hails departing day ;
The wild rose dipp'd in Nature's purest dyes,
With odours sweet rewards the rustic lay.
Ah ! who can contemplate the peaceful cot,
Or sit beneath yon mountain's fringed brow,
And view the village swain's contented lot,
Envy the joys which pomp and greatness know !
Far from the precincts of the proud and vain
In yon green wood I'll tune the past'ral strain.

SONNET,

TO AUTUMN.

SEE now bedropp'd with gold the drizzled plain,
 See yellow Autumn close the vernal year,
 The peasant joying in his shelter'd grain,
 His hopes fulfill'd, and still'd each anxious fear—
 The noon-tide of his bliss!—Let Ev'ning frown,
 He bites his hardy crust, nor chides the prude,
 Nor mocks her dusk attire—though early down
 She draws the deep-fring'd graces of her hood:
 On him she'll smile, and from his artless brows
 Wipe off the dew of toil, and gently spread
 O'er his straw couch the only veil it knows;
 While Labour strews fresh poppies round his head—
 Labour, chief nurse of Health, own parent of Repose,
 Thy gifts outweigh the best that slothful Greatness knows.

SONNET,

TO WINTER.

NOW Winter lifts his sable flag on high,
 Now o'er the heath the wild winds whistle loud,
 Nature aghast beholds the threat'ning sky,
 And views with torpid fear the boding cloud.
 How drear, how desolate the whiten'd scene!
 How moans the shrill blast through the leafless trees,
 Whilom bedeck'd in many-tinted green,
 And gently murm'ring to th' autumnal breeze!
 See with slow steps along the trackless snow,
 The beggar shiv'ring in his tatter'd vest—
 See how the rain-drop beats his hoary brow,
 From the bleak frost how shrinks his aged breast,—
 Sinking beneath cold Penury's control,
 The cheerless winter of the frozen soul.

ODE,
TO MEMORY.

HASTE, Mem'ry, with recording page,
Illumin'd by the torch of Truth,
And teach the feeble voice of Age
To sing of long-departed youth.
O! let me backward turn mine eyes,
Nor lose in time those frolic joys,
In rosy wreaths which bound my mind;
By innocence and ease, and laughing mirth entwin'd.

O Mem'ry! to my fancy bring
Those hours, when erst I jocund stray'd;
And raptur'd touch'd the Muses' string,
At ev'ning in the verdant glade;
Or listen'd to his friendly voice,
Who early taught my heart a choice:
Bless'd be those scenes of sportive folly,
Which knew no gloomy cares, no dim-ey'd melancholy.

Bring back those hours, supremely bless'd,
When thrilling transports fill'd my mind,
When pleasure warm'd my youthful breast,
When gentle Amoret was kind.

'Twas then I led the active dance,
Or sportful aim'd the flying lance,
Nor saw approach the frosts of age,
Nor Time's all-conquering scythe, and quick-destroying rage.

'Twas then I strung the tuneful lyre,
'Twas then enthusiasm stole,
And, aided by poetic fire,
Enslav'd at once my glowing soul.
'Twas then I call'd upon the Muse,
Nor did the gentle dame refuse
To crown my brows with living bays,
And grant the gaudy meed of perishable praise.

Why, Mem'ry, do I court thy aid,
To call back hours of youth and joy,
Who still delight'st—O cruel maid!
To dash thy pleasures with alloy!
For while I listen to thy lore,
Retracing scenes to pass no more,
Dost thou not prompt the rising sigh,
And claim the bitter tear for happiness gone by?

RURAL PLEASURES.

AH! who would quit the woodland scene,
 The daïsied copse, the hillock green,
 The rustic oak's far-spreading shade,
 The sylvan beauties of the glade,
 The peaceful, solitary glen,
 For the tumultuous haunts of men!
 Give me o'er forests wild to stray
 At mellow eve, or twilight grey,
 Or lonely on the russet heath
 To taste the gentle zephyrs' breath;
 Or, list'ning to some dashing stream,
 Pursue the soft poetic dream,
 Far from the scenes of noisy strife,
 And all the fordid toil of life.
 Give me to view the golden sheaf,
 And yellow Autumn's dropping leaf;
 Sad emblem of our drooping kind,
 Impress'd upon the pensive mind:
 To me more pleasing is the gloom,
 Than jocund Spring's enliv'ning bloom.
 When Night her sable mantle falls,
 I'll seek some castle's mould'ring walls;
 And where the moonlight fairies haunt,
 I'll hear the mournful songstress chaunt,

Reclin'd beneath the green-clad holly,
 With Fancy by my side, and gentle Melancholy.
 Or you, ye gay, to whom belong
 The sportive dance, the mirthful song,
 Come taste the fount of rural joy,
 Whence pleasure flows without alloy ;
 O! quit the worldling's crowded door
 For the light revels of the poor.
 See how the hoary-headed swain
 Smiles o'er his stores of yellow grain ;
 While, gently warbling through the vale,
 The milk-maid bears her flowing pail ;
 And, his light wing on ether borne,
 The sky-lark hails the ruddy morn.
 See how the jocund village lass
 Trips in gay measures o'er the grass,
 While many a youth and maid advance
 To join the joy-inspiring dance,
 The social laugh and glee rebound,
 And echo wafts the mirthful sound :
 For pure delight and pleasure free
 Are gifts of thine, Simplicity.

And when dark Winter o'er the land
 Extends his desolating wand,
 We'll creep around the cottage fire,
 List'ning to some hoary fire,

And, shrouded from the biting cold,
 Hear many a wondrous legend told,
 Till Slumber with his heavy mace,
 Usurping fix'd Attention's place,
 Descends our weary eyes to close,
 And shed the balm of soft repose.

ON THE

ABSENCE OF A FRIEND.

AH, fedge-crowned Deva ! in murmurings grieve,
And mourn, O ye willows which bend o'er the stream,
Ye zephyrs which play on her bosom at eve,
When Cynthia o'erfilters the wave with her beam.

No more o'er your copse, as at noon-tide I stray,
Or at even's calm hour, the pure breeze to inhale,
Shall Friendship's soft harmony gladden the way,
Or Anna's lov'd accents be borne on the gale.

Ah ! swift fleet the moments by flowrets entwin'd,
When ev'ry delight by gay fancy is dress'd,
When the quick fire of genius illumines the mind,
And sentiment's sigh swells the juvenile breast.

But when chill'd by old age, and harass'd by pains,
When energy's beam warms our bosoms no more ;
When life's frozen current but creeps through our veins,
And all the delusions which charm'd us are o'er ;

When Pleasure's gay wreath shall no more deck our brows,
And Health's blooming rose-bud is fled from the cheek ;
In vain do we sigh for the hour of repose,
In vain for the rest of oblivion we seek.

'Tis thus that old Time, who ne'er lingers with Joy,
My Anna conveys to some happier shore,
Ah! how shall my bosom suppress the fond sigh,
When, Deva, thy wave may behold her no more!

But Mem'ry's soft magic oft soothes the griev'd mind,
When pleasures long past to our view it conveys;
Then deep in my heart be the moments enshrin'd,
When Anna first smil'd on my efforts to please.

SONNET.

THE ROSE-BUD:

ADDRESSED TO MISS S—L—R,

ON LEAVING SCHOOL.

GO, lovely bud, and on thy native air
Shed the rich treasure of thy op'ning sweets ;
Rejoin thy parent stem, and safely there
Adorn the fairest bank of Pleasure's seats :
There may no weed destructive taint the gale,
Lurking in Pleasure's paths—may flowrets pour
Their balmy effluence, and those sweets exhale,
Whence Hybla culls her aromatic store.
As when thou erst in distant regions grew,
May gentle woodbines' shelt'ring branches twine
Around thy stalk—sharing ambrosial dew,
In pleached tendernefs repaid by thine :
Till Cupid, seizing the predestin'd hour,
For life transplants thee in the myrtle bower.

THE
SONNET.
ANCHORET.

NOW o'er the brown forest the wind whistled shrill,
And low wav'd the firs to the loud-screaming blast,
Deep groan'd the rash torrent which swept o'er the hill,
And fullenly croak'd the hoarse bird as it pass'd.

On the rock's craggy summit the Anchorer stood,
Where droop'd the lone willow despoil'd of its green;
His sighs join'd the murmurs which broke from the flood,
And wildly he gaz'd on the desolate scene.

" O! welcome, bleak winds, to my age-stricken breast,

" And dear to my mind is the deepening gloom ;

" Your horrors shall rock my sad soul to its rest,

" And guide my slow steps to the mouldering tomb.

" Now youth's gaudy colours are faded away,

" And life's silly visions no longer are bright ;

" Dim twilight succeeds to the radiance of day,

" And all shall be wrapp'd in the mantle of night.

" For frail as the dewdrop which hangs on the thorn,

" Are the pleasures which Hope still presents to the heart :

" The drop, by a blast from the spray may be borne,

" And Hope be expell'd by Misfortune's keen dart.

“ For know, giddy youth, though by Fortune carefs’d,
“ Though Pleasure still woos thee, her banquet to share,
“ Ere Death shall have laid the green turf on thy breast,
“ Thy brow shall be mark’d by the wrinkles of Care.

“ For Pleasure still hastens thy grasp to elude,
“ And loves, like a meteor, at distance to shine;
“ Though courted with warmth, and with ardour pursued,
“ Yet vain is the chase, for she ne’er shall be thine.

“ For mild as the sunbeam that tinges the morn,
“ She rose on my dawn, and a chaplet she wove;
“ And smiling, she bade it my temples adorn,
“ And taught my light heart her allurements to love.

“ But quickly I wak’d, and the phantom was fled,
“ The vision retir’d with the summer of youth:
“ I hail the loud tempest which howls round my head;
“ Its language, though rude, is the language of truth.

“ Now Winter’s dark vapours are closing around,
“ And the thickening blast spends its rage on my brow:
“ O! why should I start at the ominous sound,
“ Which gently presages an end to my woe?”

ODE,

TO SOLITUDE.

WHETHER in some moss-fringed cell,
 Or musing in the leaf-clad bower,
 To thee devote, I tune my shell,
 And woo thee at the silent hour,
 O nymph divine ! sweet Solitude !
 Who oft, beneath some cottage rude,
 Pour'st thy wild strains to peaceful Even,
 With Contemplation mild, her eyes uplift' to Heaven.

Oft, when by many a care oppress'd,
 To thee my sorrowing heart I've borne,
 To thee alone my woes confess'd,
 At grey-ey'd eve or blushing morn ;
 Or when the waning orb of day
 Gilds the far mountain with his ray ;
 Or sinking low beneath the wave,
 Quenches his radiant beam in Ocean's darksome cave.

Or when the distant village bell
 In fullen murmurs greets mine ear,
 I seek thee in the primrose dell,
 And drop with thee the silent tear ;

Unmark'd by Rumour's busy tongue,
Unnotic'd by the reckless throng,
To thee my orisons I pay,
And quit the laughing world, well pleas'd with thee to stray.

Lo ! where yon mould'ring ruins nod,
Sad vestige of departed years,
Beneath stern Rigour's iron rod,
And Superstition's giant fears,
Watching the ling'ring hours of night,
The trembling lamp's expiring light,
Oft hast thou seen thy daughters pale
Wafting their lonely sighs through midnight's fable veil.

Beneath yon mountain's tow'ring brow,
Whose woods o'erwave the dusky stream,
Lull'd by the fountain's rippling flow,
By meek-ey'd Cynthia's silver beam ;
Hush'd all its cares, my peaceful breast
Beats mild, each sorrowing throb suppress'd,
When sweetly slumb'ring watch'd by thee,
Upon the bosom calm of soft Serenity.

See where young Science quits the throng,
Beneath thy beechen shade to stray,
While Genius aids the ardent song,
And warms his soul with fervid ray ;

'Tis thine to nurse the embryo flame,
 Point out the steepy path to fame,
 Teach him the Muse's shrine to seek,
 And bid Hope's rosy blush play mantling o'er his cheek.

Then since to thee a youthful bard
 Unnoted pours the strain of praise,
 Hopeless to meet the bright reward,
 The laurel meed of happier lays ;
 O! grant from forth thy fragrant bower,
 To crown my muse, one simple flower ;
 Grant, while I seek thy woodland shade,
 The wildly blooming rose that scents the ev'ning glade.

ODE,
TO HEALTH.

INSCRIBED TO A FRIEND.

TO thee, Hygeia! rose-lip'd queen,
Gay sov'reign of the village green!
I pay my artless vow;
O! deign to hear my simple song,
Which floats the hawthorn glades among,
Where purest zephyrs blow.

For there, as rustic annals say,
Fresh as the op'ning smile of day,
Thou build'st thy woodbine cell;
Or wand'ring o'er the fir-clad hill,
Quaff'st the clear nectar of the rill,
Wild rushing down the dell.

The dewdrop glitters on the thorn,
And blushes deck the cheek of Morn,
Touch'd by the spicy gale:
Where'er thy blooming face is seen,
How deep, how bright the em'rald green,
Which fringes o'er the vale!

But, ah ! in vain would Fortune shower
Her treasures o'er the ling'ring hour,
Shouldst thou avert thine eye ;
In vain would Pleasure's brilliant ray
Attempt to cheer life's cloudy day,
Should fair Hygeia fly.

Not for the gems which gild the mine,
I bend my knee at Plutus' shrine,
No glitt'ring toy I seek ;
A nobler boon canst thou bestow—
To emulate the ruby's glow,
Thou bid'st the pallid cheek.

Then on my Anna's drooping head,
O ! deign thy rosy balm to shed,
For her thy chaplets weave ;
O ! let my Anna's faded eye,
Sparkling, convey the tale of joy,
Such joy as thou canst give.

O ! let her join thy ruddy train,
While free from care and ling'ring pain
The day in pleasure flows ;
And nightly o'er my Anna's brow
Do thou thy gentlest opiates strew,
And lull her to repose.

TO GOOD HUMOUR.

INSCRIBED TO A FRIEND.

HAIL, Goddess! who with aspect mild
Canst smooth the rugged brow of Rage;
Thou, at whose touch our passions wild,
No more their angry warfare wage:

Thou who canst hear Injustice chide
With breast unruffled and serene;
Thou who canst bear the sneer of Pride,
And keep thy calm unalter'd mien:

Thou who canst hush the rising storm,
And, smiling, ev'ry good resign;
Thou who within a mortal's form,
Hast deign'd to raise thy flower-deck'd shrine:

O! may Eliza's gentle breast
For ever own thy placid sway,
Still by thy soothing influence blest'd,
And cheer'd by thy benignant ray:

Long may she feel each pure delight,
Still by thy social touch refin'd,
While ev'ry sorrow presses light,
As gossamer waving in the wind.

May smiles still chase the tranfient tear,
As fun-gleams deck the fummer-shower,
And guide her from the cavern drear,
Where Difcontent is wont to lour !

And when old Time with haggard hand
His wrinkles o'er her cheek fhall fhed,
O! mayft thou ev'ry fhock withftand,
And grace her mind when youth is fled !

Sweet Goddeffs, who with blue-ey'd Mirth
O'er flow'ry meads delight'ft to rove,
O! may I e'er confefs thy worth,
And in my friend thy image love !

SONNET.

HUSH'D is the glade; the moon, serenely bright,
 Pours her mild rays afloat yon hoary hill;
 No sound pervades the tranquil ear of Night,
 Save the deep murmurs of the falling rill.
 Where yon huge cliff o'erhangs the silent deep,
 And o'er the wild wave bends his awful brow,
 There shall my heart its mournful vigils keep,
 And count the hours which steep'd in sorrow flow.
 How oft have Hope and Fancy smiling strove,
 O'er my sad soul to pour the balm of peace;
 But Reason tore the wreath which Fancy wove,
 And frowning bade the lovely vision cease;
 Bade me seek comfort for my aching breast
 In the cold grave, where e'en the wretched rest.

F

SONNET.

WHEN Contemplation bids her vot'ries stray
O'er the grey forest, or the with'ring heath,
O! be it mine to wend my penfive way
To the dark bournes of Solitude and Death.
Nor shrinks my soul, when, lo! the awful bell
Flings in deep sounds its horrors through the gloom,
Though well I know its sad, its solemn swell,
Wafts a new tenant to the mould'ring tomb.
Wait but the ebbing of a little breath,
Another flumb'rer seeks the realms of sleep,
Again thy knell conveys the tale of death,
And says, Another wretch has ceas'd to weep,
Another wand'rer quits this world of woe,
And asks that peace Heav'n only can bestow..

SONNET.

O YE! who spread aloft your filken sails,
While down bright Pleasure's glassy stream ye glide,
Wafted by Fortune's ever-varying gales
Beneath Hope's flatt'ring sky, steer'd by your pilot Pride—
The syren song of gay Security
Thrills in soft measures through the charmed air;
She bids ye listen to the tale of Joy,
Nor fear the storms of Grief nor rugged rocks of Care.
But see with Fate's dark clouds the sky o'ercast;
Now through the shrouds the whistling tempest raves,
Cold Disappointment comes with chilling blast,
And whelms your painted bark deep in Destruction's waves,
Untaught to stem Misfortune's torrents rude,
Or shun the hidden rocks of sad Vicissitude.

SONNET,

INSCRIBED TO A FRIEND,

ON PRESENTING HER WITH A BOOK OF POEMS.

O! SAY, my Muse, what wak'd thy early strain,
 Why in weak tremblings spoke the untun'd lyre,
 Why burnt bright rapture in my infant brain,
 Why fought my dauntless steps the bright Castalian choir?
 Say, wouldst thou snatch the laurel wreath of Fame,
 And bear aloft its honours on thy brows,
 Or barter for Ambition's empty claim,
 Contentment's solid bliss, the smiles of soft Repose?
 'Twas not the fickle crowd's promiscuous praise,
 'Twas Friendship's voice in soothing whispers spoke,
 'Twas Friendship's voice inspir'd the artless lays,
 And at her word the slumb'ring lyre awoke;
 She taught me first my fearless eye to raise
 On bold Ambition's fun, nor shrink beneath its rays.

EPITAPH

ON

MISS MARIA TOWNSEND.

COULD Innocence, could Beauty, ward the dart,
 No shaft of Death had pierc'd thy gentle heart ;
 Still would thy rip'ning charms securely bloom,
 Nor friends nor parents mourn thy early doom.
 Still, lov'd Maria ! wouldst thou sweetly move,
 Virtue still guide, and kindred worth approve ;
 From Truth's undevious path unknown to bend,
 And by a slower progress reach the end—
 So soon obtain'd !—Ah ! wherefore heaves the sigh ?
 All are not innocent—yet all must die—
 The boon was transient—but 'twas kindly given !
 A mortal's lost—an angel's found in Heaven !

ODE,
TO DEATH.

I.

SOFT I seek yon ruin'd tower,
Where the baleful ivy clings,
Where at midnight's solemn hour,
Flaps the bat with leathern wings :
Where the screech-owl screaming near,
Harshly greets the list'ning ear,
Shunning the garish eye of day,
I seek thy realms, O Death ! beneath pale Cynthia's ray.

II.

O thou ! whose ever-dreaded dart
Strikes pale confusion through the breast,
And oft within the laughing heart
Obtrud'st, a cold, unwelcome guest ;
Beneath soft Pleasure's myrtle crown,
Thou lov'st to hide thy hideous frown ;
When Hope presents the scene of joy,
Thy mighty arm is rais'd to crush the brittle toy.

III.

See, how old Time, with halting pace,
Bids Autumn strew the faded leaf,
While every charm on Nature's face
Is plunder'd by the hoary thief !
So thou, 'mid Beauty's dazzling train,
Wouldst still usurp a hateful reign,
And through the treach'rous hectic's bloom,
Hint to the startled mind a presage of its doom.

IV.

Where Wit and brilliant Genius reign,
Thou bid'st thy murd'rous shafts to fly,
While Fever fires the ardent brain,
And Madness glares with vacant eye :
And wouldst thou still, with ruthless power,
Crop ev'ry sweet and blooming flower,
While wrinkled Age with joyless heart,
And Sorrow bares her breast, and shrinks not from thy dart ?

V.

See, where the Conqu'ror's founding car
Bears horror o'er the ravag'd plain ;
While Desolation, Famine, War,
People with crowds thy dark domain !

The widow's curse, the orphan's tear,
Pursue the hero's mad career ;
Yet wait one short, one transient breath,
The mighty warrior lies, pale prisoner of Death.

VI.

Then shall Ambition's lordly claim
Rouse from the dust his nerveless arm,
Or the loud trump of martial fame
Once more the hero's bosom warm ?
Ah, no !—Cold as the sculptur'd stones
Which guard from harm his mould'ring bones,
He hears no more the voice of praise—
In vain the monarch's smile, or poet's plaufive lays.

VII.

Ah ! where are now the giddy throng
Of young and old, of grave and gay,
Which flutter'd erst life's walks among,
Frail insects of a summer's day ?
Down Time's resistless torrent borne,
Their names from Mem'ry's records torn,
Through thy drear realm, stern power, they fly,
To seek the blest'd abodes of Immortality.

VIII.

Lo! where Despair with frantic hand
Tears from thy grasp the ling'ring dart,
And, scorning Reason's precepts bland,
Deep sheaths it in his throbbing heart!
Then haste to shed the wish'd relief,
And close the aching eyes of Grief.
With thee pale Misery weeps no more,
And Sorrow, sweetly sleeps her dream of trouble o'er.

IX.

Mingling their undistinguish'd bones,
There sleep the idiot and the sage:
Hush'd are the patient sufferer's groans,
And hush'd the gloomy threats of rage;
Silenc'd the bard's inspiring song,
And Sophistry's Circean tongue;
There, Flattery ceases to deceive,
And impious sceptics, there, no longer disbelieve.

X.

Then, nor the shroud, thy sad array,
Nor solemn hearse with nodding plume,
Shall shake my breast with wild dismay,
Or fright me from thy peaceful gloom;

But when the breeze with fullen swell
Shall waft the deep, funereal bell,
On my wrapt ear, by Fancy driven,
The requiem's holy chaunt shall lift my soul to Heaven.

FINIS.

